



The Iraqi Society of Oregon

الجمعية العراقية في أوريغون

To: EPA/ Portland Harbor Comments

Subject: Portland Harbor Clean up

Iraqi community members (signatures attached) in Portland want to make these comments on The Portland Harbor Clean Up plan:

- 1- We, Iraqi Americans, came for the land of two rivers (Mesopotamia), and we descend from the civilization that created the Alphabet for Human civilization. We believe that the Human civilization started and propagated on rivers like ours (Tigris and Euphrates). We believe that civilization in Portland should thrive on clean rivers that can support the life of residents and not be a source of danger. The Willamette river has been the source of life in this area, and unfortunately this river especially the Portland Harbor area had been polluted and became dangerous for human use.
- 2- We came looking for a new life in America, and a better future for our children. Restoring the environment is the best way to provide this opportunity for our children and coming generations. It is important that we act as soon as possible so we can minimize the cost and prevent permanent damage.
- 3- More people than ever are starting to realize how much contamination has destroyed areas like our water streams, forests, and many other places in the environment. The river is in dire need of clean up. The earlier we start the faster the natural healing process of the river can be.
- 4- A partial Cleanup and waiting for natural recovery is not reasonable. The contaminants (PCBs) will remain to be a continuous danger and source of toxicity now and in the future. The contaminants should be removed completely and placed in an appropriate facility like the Wasco or Roosevelt facilities.
- 5- Moreover, meeting with businesses alongside the river need to be held to discuss future ways to monitor and control any contaminations. They need to put their share in funding the cleanup. This may lead to a signed agreement or even a new measure to ensure that companies follow the agreed upon rules.
- 6- We are used to fishing, and eating fish is a traditional custom for us. Also we are used to have recreational time on the banks of rivers. Unfortunately, we are unable to do the same here because of the poisonous levels of contamination in the fish here. We ask that Oregon Health Authority takes the responsibility of verifying the healthy quality of fish.

Accept our best regards

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P.S: Attached 4 lists with 46 signatures on this letter.

